

Minutes of 2.11.2021 Maynard Economic Development Committee, 8 am., via Zoom

Meeting called to order at 8:04 am.

Members' present: Bill Nemser, Roz Greenstein, Lynda Thayer, Greg Johnson, Frank Dzerkacz, Jerry Beck, Karen Freker, and Sarah Cressy.

Others' present: Zannah Noe (Economic Dev. Project Coordinator), Mark Pesce (Resident), Justin DeMarco (DPW), and Armand Diarbekirian (BOS Liaison).

Minutes of 1/28/2021. Thayer proposed that language be added to the minutes to reflect the general support of the proposed bag ban. Cressy suggested that the MEDC vote against the motion to defer discussion until next year, reflects support of the bag ban.

Committee voted to unanimously support minutes as presented.

Naylor Court Dumpster Project

At a previous meeting Dzerkacz brought up the challenge of “odor management,” that might result from a collection of dumpsters in a “dumpster coral.”

Through his research, Bill suggested that we categorize waste as 1) organic waste, which is a major byproduct of food establishments, 2) recyclables, and 3) ordinary trash. Ways to manage odor include more frequent pick-ups, better containers, and impervious screening to direct odor up, rather than out.

The MEDC discussed “who owns this project?” According to Johnson, Zammuto will determine this when she comes back from family leave, early March, 2021.

DeMarco suggested that while the Town can pitch the concept, downtown businesses who currently house their dumpster in Naylor Court will need to “buy in.” According to DeMarco, these businesses will need to bear the cost of their trash disposal, not the Town. Regulations regarding trash disposal under the BOH’s jurisdiction.

Dzerkacz thinks that with the right vendor, the project can be effectively managed.

Dzerkacz asked, what if people in the basin do not want to participate? DeMarco responded that dumpsters may be housed on private property but cannot use public land for private use.

By pooling resources, DeMarco suggested that because removal of organic matter and recycling cost less to dispose of than single-stream waste, total waste disposal should be less for each commercial client. Two RFPs would most likely need to be announced—one for organic matter, and the other for trash and recyclables.

Thayer suggested that this proposal of collective refuse collection, is far different than the original proposal of “dumpster coral” that would house independent dumpsters, where each business would be responsible for the own “trash.” The fact that potential participants have individual contracts could complicate the process.

Johnson found this conversation productive. While we are not going to settle everything right now, he just wants to make sure that “everyone’s at the table.” Given the potential savings, Pesce recommend

that “right now might be a good time” to implement, given the challenges businesses are facing due to the pandemic.

Process to Establish New Members

While MEDC Members are appointed by the TA, to serve the TA, Johnson suggests a more formal process to insure increased “buy in” from MEDC members. Johnson has created a questionnaire. Going forward, interested members will submit a completed questionnaire that will be reviewed by both Johnson and MEDC members. We will be receiving a questionnaire from Mark Pesce in the coming two weeks. A Maynard resident, Mark owns a Dunkin’ in Maynard, Acton, and Concord. The Committee will vote on their recommendation regarding Pesce joining the committee at the next MEDC meeting.

BEEP Application for Downtown Holiday Decorations

Historically, the Maynard Business Alliance contracted with an outside vendor to decorate the downtown for the December holiday season. However, the cost is no longer sustainable for the organization. DeMarco proposed that if the MBA purchased the decorations, that the DPW, would install, maintain, and store the decorations, much like the flower basket program.

The Downtown Enhancement fund, which has historically funded BEEP projects, currently has \$5232 of unencumbered funds, according to DeMarco.

Thayer submitted a BEEP proposal, on behalf of the MEDC, requesting approximately \$3200 to cover the purchase of holiday decorations. She and DeMarco wish to purchase the decorations before the end of February to obtain a 33% discount. DeMarco reported that in previous conversations, Johnson would not endorse until Zammuto’s return. Additionally, due to “separation of church and state,” funding holiday projects that can be perceived as “religious,” may be sticky. DeMarco stepped out of the meeting to re-discuss the issue with Johnson. During DeMarco’s absence, Greenstein asked for a straw vote of support for the BEEP proposal. Response was mixed. DeMarco came back to the meeting and reported that Johnson is still uncomfortable with the utilization of this funding method.

Thayer withdrew the BEEP proposal, but reminded the group that until two years ago, meter revenue funded downtown enhancement projects.

Historically, once the MEDC approved a BEEP proposal, it went directly to the BOS. Is this still the process, or does it go to Johnson before it goes to the BOS?

Recognizing Former Members

Greenstein asked how best to recognize former members? Thayer asked about precedent. While no precedent has been set, Greenstein feels that MacKeen and Downey’s former leadership positions as Chair and Vice Chair suffices. Greenstein will send a thank you letter, on behalf of the MEDC, Beck will explore the possibility of a gift of artwork from ArtSpace Maynard.

Other—

Greenstein will resend the economic development vision for Maynard “white paper” that she created in 2020 and that the Committee discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 am.